

AUSTRALIA'S
silent film
FESTIVAL®



Laughter in the Library!

With Soundtracks

July 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 2pm
Digital restoration of silent films

Metcalfe Auditorium State Library NSW Macquarie St Sydney
The Front Page
***Modern Times* (in its 80th Anniversary Year)**
Whisky Galore
Passport to Pimlico

Tickets through festival website and call t 0419 267318
Tickets \$20 / \$15 Friend of the Library and concession

Gold Pass to all four sessions \$70/ \$50 Friend of Library and concession



STATE LIBRARY®
NEW SOUTH WALES



Sunday July 3 at 2pm



The Front Page (1931)

100 minutes Black and white United States

Australian premiere of the digitally restored edition with soundtrack.

“Raucous, irreverent, and remarkably funny, THE FRONT PAGE is a landmark in cinema history ; a brilliantly orchestrated, high-speed satire that set the standard for the countless screwball comedies that followed in its wake. But few films can match the risqué flavor and the relentless pace of the masterpiece that spawned an entire genre, earning Academy Award

nominations for Best Picture, Best Actor (Adolphe Menjou), and Best Director (Lewis Milestone), as well as a spot on the esteemed National Film Registry. Based on the wildly successful (and controversial) play by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, THE FRONT PAGE follows hard-boiled crime reporter Hildy Johnson (Pat O'Brien) who has vowed to quit the business and marry his new sweetheart (Mary Brian). But when a political radical (George E. Stone) escapes from custody on the eve of his hanging, the reporter's room is plunged into comedic chaos, and Hildy's brash editor (Menjou) sees it as an opportunity to manipulate the reporter into staying.” Kino Lorber

New York Times: March 1931

“THE SCREEN; A Newspaper Melodrama. A German Musical Film. On Other Screens.

By MORDAUNT HALL.

Published: March 20, 1931

A witty and virile talking picture has been wrought from "The Front Page," the play of Chicago newspaper life by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur. This film, which is now at the Rivoli, differs but little in construction from the parent work. It is a fast-paced entertainment and, while its humor is frequently harsh, it assuredly won favor with the audience yesterday afternoon.

Adolphe Menjou, who has hitherto confined himself to the impersonation of suave philanderers, steps outside those bounds and portrays Walter Burns, the keen managing editor of a Chicago daily, a rôle that was acted on the stage by Osgood Perkins. Under the direction of Lewis Milestone, producer of "All Quiet on the Western Front," Mr. Menjou does excellent work. He may be a little too gentle occasionally, but in most of his scenes

he is true to the character, even to digging his hands in his trouser pockets, raving about news leads and spouting expletives.

Pat O'Brien, a newcomer to the screen, is entrusted with the impersonation of Hildy Johnson, played on the stage by Lee Tracy. Mr. O'Brien gives quite a good account of himself as the reporter who, when he is about to abandon newspaper work, harkens to the call of a good story.

Although some of the minor characters are not quite as effective as they were on the stage, there is as good an impression of them as film footage permits. They indulge in their argot and have their own interpretations of the news of a story, this being set forth chiefly by the descriptions used by them in telephoning their news bulletins from the press room of the Criminal Courts Building in the Windy City.

In the course of this sturdy melodrama, Earle Williams, a convict who was to be executed, escapes, and general excitement reigns in the Criminal Courts Building. Sheriff Hartman is thoroughly humiliated, for the prisoner got away through having borrowed Hartman's pistol while demonstrating where he (Williams) stood during the moment of the crime of which he was convicted. Politics is mixed with newspaper activities when the Mayor and Hartman try to bribe a messenger who brings word of Williams's reprieve by the Governor.

It is emphatically humorous when Williams is hidden in a roll-top desk in the press room by Johnson and Burns, whose sole desire is to have a news scoop. And eventually there comes Hartman's discovery of the prisoner and the handcuffing of Johnson and Burns for helping a criminal to escape.

In a clever manner the the producers have succeeded in retaining many more of the lines of the play than was anticipated. The censor is in more than one instance virtually defied through ingenious ideas.

Edward Everett Horton plays the dreamy, poetic reporter, Bensinger, in which rôle he is quite successful. Mary Brian is Peggy. Clarence H. Wilson gives a sterling performance as Hartman. Matt Moore, Slim Summerville, Spencer Charters and Walter Catlett do their share to make this a rousing entertainment.”

Sunday July 10 at 2pm

Modern Times (1936)

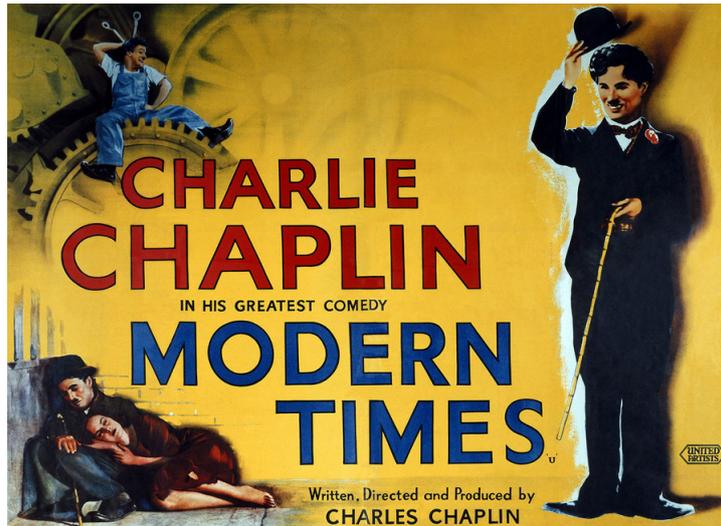
87 minutes Black and white United States

Digitally restored edition with soundtrack

2016 marks the 80th Anniversary of MODERN TIMES.

“Modern Times, Charlie Chaplin’s last outing as the Little Tramp, puts the iconic character to work as a giddily inept factory employee who becomes smitten with a gorgeous gamine (Paulette Goddard). With its barrage of unforgettable gags and sly commentary on class struggle during the Great

Depression, *Modern Times*—though made almost a decade into the talkie era and containing moments of sound (even song!)—is a timeless showcase of Chaplin’s untouchable genius as a director of silent comedy.” Criterion

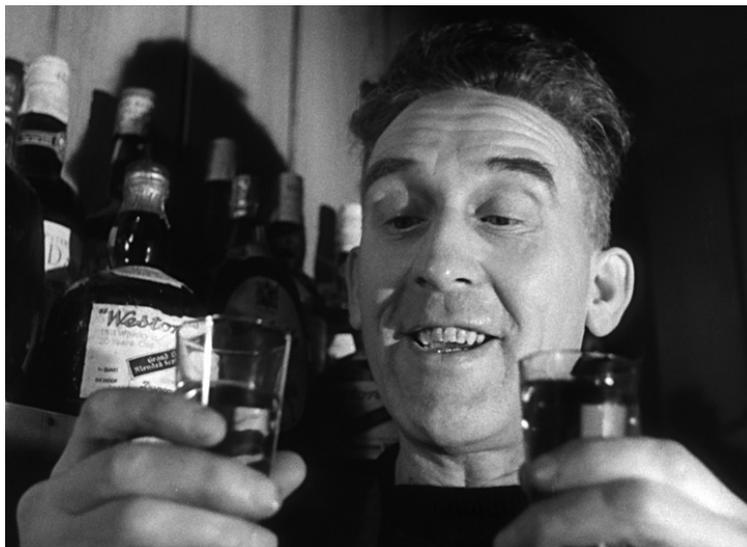
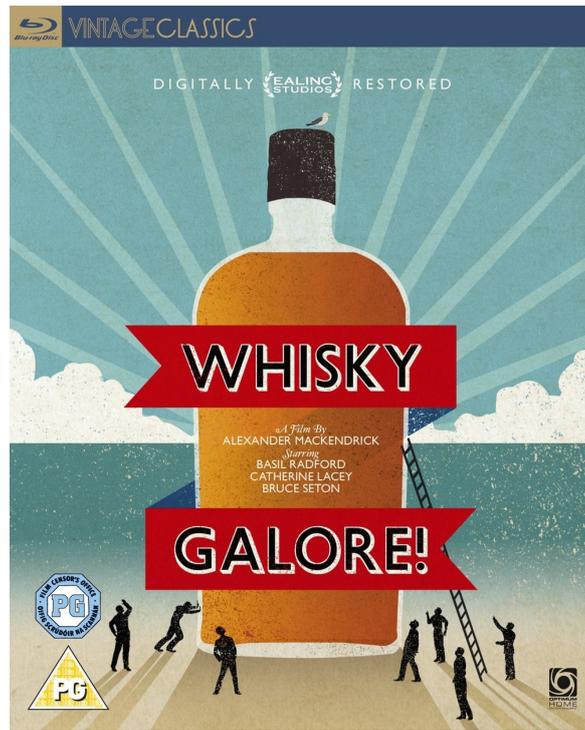


Park Circus notes: “In *Modern Times*, one of Charles Chaplin’s most popular films, the Tramp struggles to live in a modern industrial society with the help of a young, homeless woman, played by Paulette Goddard. The film is both the last of the Tramp films and the last silent film Chaplin made and is another masterful mix of drama, social comment and wonderful comedy.”

New York Post wrote: The gorgeous spoofing, the annihilating inventiveness of the comedy, comes from Chaplin rather than from his material. The picture is a brilliant succession of gags and stunts, strung together on the priceless tradition of Chaplin himself. His story is not so much a satiric thrust at the machine age as it is an employment of machinery as a field for comedy... There is no doubt that *Modern Times* is the season’s motion picture event.

The New York Times wrote: Sociological concept? Maybe. But a rousing, rib-tickling, gag-bestrewn jest for all that and in the best Chaplin manner... This morning there is good news. Chaplin is back.





Sunday July 17 at 2pm

Whisky Galore (1949)

82 minutes Black and white United Kingdom

Digitally restored edition with soundtrack

“Based on a true story. The name of the real ship, that sunk Feb 5 1941 - during WWII - was S/S Politician. Having left Liverpool two days earlier, heading for Jamaica, it sank outside Eriskay, The Outer Hebrides, Scotland, in bad weather, containing 250,000 bottles of whisky. The locals gathered as many bottles as they could, before the proper authorities arrived, and even today, bottles are found in the sand or in the sea every other year.”

Bluray.com

“Whisky Galore! (1949) is an Ealing Comedy directed by Alexander Mackendrick and produced by Michael Balcon, adapted from a novel by Compton MacKenzie

Whenever you read about treasure turning up on a beach, one of the best-loved British movies can spring to mind, evoking a warm-hearted nostalgia for more innocent times.

However, the Scottish island folk of Whisky Galore! are even more determined than the hordes who plundered washed-up containers. They take boats out to a stricken vessel lying off the (fictitious) Isle of Today and unload as many of the 50,000 cases of booze on board as they can, seconds before the ship capsizes, and then play cat-and-mouse with Customs and Excise officers for days.

That said, it's hard to begrudge the islanders their loot. Whisky provides one of only two distractions in a Calvinist community so strictly Sabbatarian that they wait a whole day before rowing out to the ship. (The other "simple pleasure" is alluded to as a smiling couple watch their nine children running out to play.)

Director Alexander Mackendrick, US-born but raised in Scotland, deftly translates Compton MacKenzie's novel – based on a real-life wartime incident in the Outer Hebrides – on to the big screen. The sunny,

windswept locations are gorgeous, the black-and-white photography lending them a stark purity (this despite appalling shooting conditions which meant that the production went way over budget.”

The first-rate cast includes foxy Joan Greenwood as a spirited local girl toying with the emotions of an English soldier, James Robertson Justice as the cantankerous village doctor, and a fresh-faced Gordon Jackson weak with love for the shopkeeper's daughter.

If many of the locals bear a strong resemblance to John Laurie's dour, lugubrious Private Frazer in *Dad's Army*, Basil Radford, as the Englishman

in command of the island's Home Guard brigade, is an uncanny pre-echo of Arthur Lowe's pompous, spluttering Capt Mainwaring.

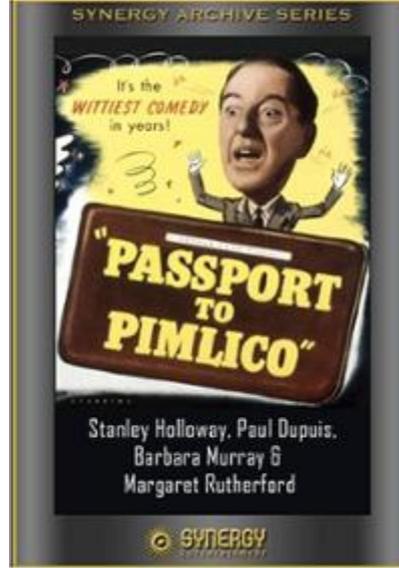
Whisky Galore! was one of three Ealing comedies released in 1949 (the others were *Passport to Pimlico* and *Kind Hearts and Coronets*), and remains by far the sharpest, freshest and most resonant.” Telegraph.co.uk

Sunday July 24 at 2pm

Passport to Pimlico (1949)

84 minutes Black and white United Kingdom

Digitally restored edition with soundtrack



“When British comedies were at their zenith!”

The story of "Passport to Pimlico" is one of those inventive comedies of classic British cinema. Pimlico is a small area of central London, and in it is a leftover WWII German bomb that explodes, uncovering an underground cave containing treasures and a scroll from the Duke of Burgundy. The scroll is translated and it turns out that Pimlico is not part of England, but still a part of Burgundy, France. The first thing the citizens do is tear up their English ration books, and go hogwild buying as much food and clothes as they want. Londoners start flooding into this "foreign land" to buy some of these items, until the government of England sets up roadblocks going in and out. The highjinks continue as the new Burgundians fight for their rights.

Sporting an impressive British cast of Stanley Holloway, Margaret Rutherford, and Hermione Baddeley, laughs come often in this witty black-and-white film from 1948, one of the first of Ealing Studios classic comedies. “ Bluray.com



“And so, it came to an end. Not with a whimper, but with a bang: *Passport to Pimlico*, one of the best known 'Ealing comedies', one of the films that (it is claimed) speaks for the whole of the studio's output and thematic interests, and one of the films that first sparked my love of Ealing many years ago. It remains a film of its time and place but, watching it during a time of British recession and austerity, it is also a film that can still provide a satirical edge to events, over sixty years on.

When an unexploded bomb (which is supposed to be the final one in London, until another one is found: a small comment on the fragility of fame/notoriety that echoes through the rest of the film) reveals a hidden

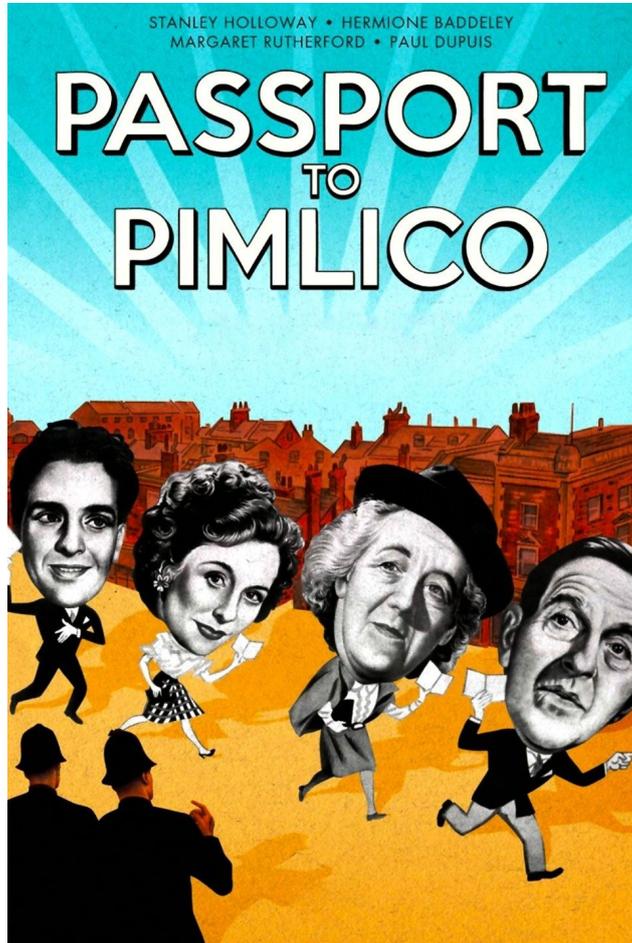
treasure trove, the inhabitants of Miramont Place, Pimlico discover the land they live on is actually owned by the Duke of Burgundy. The local's realisation that they are now Burgundians (and not bound by British law) is a beautifully structured piece of cinema that starts with the individual

realisation of bank manager Mr Wix (Raymond Huntley), which spreads through other characters, ending up in a communal 'knees up' around the piano in the local, a ripping up of ration booklets, and a rejection of traditional authority figures. Because this is Ealing, such excesses are not without their problems: as the bureaucracy of Whitehall rolls over them, Miramont Place suffers from an influx of spivs and black marketeers, the imposition of strict border controls and immigration, and the cessation of basic amenities (water, electricity, food).

The film moves along swiftly, developing new ideas quickly and never stopping, a testament to the combined skills of director Henry Cornelius, writer T.E.B. Clarke, director of photography Lionel Banes and editor Michael Truman. Narrative details are referenced in passing, not shoehorned in or signalled far in advance. The heat-wave, for example, is rarely mentioned directly in dialogue, but is alluded to visually: in the opening few minutes, we see Molly in a bikini; a few minutes later she slaps some fish into a newspaper with a weather-related headline. The end of the heat-wave is also narrated visually with a sudden rainstorm and mercury plummeting in a thermometer. The skill of the pacing is also seen in the Whitehall scenes: although featuring the star turn of Ministers Gregg (Basil Radford) and Straker (Naunton Wayne), they are brisk and rapid, short digs at bureaucracy that don't overstay their welcome (unlike Gregg and Straker, who are slow and dogmatic).

The scene in the pub also quickly and succinctly develops key characters: Wix's rational approach, the more enthusiastic and communally minded Arthur Pemberton (Stanley Holloway), and bossy Edie Randall (Hermione Baddeley). The jealousy that Molly feels over Frank Huggins (John Slater) continually trying to impress Shirley Pemberton (Barbara Murray) is expressed musically, as Molly uses her singing to lure Frank's attention away (the lyrics, 'I don't want to set the world on fire, just start a fire in your heart' reaffirm this) It offers a strong example of the film's focus on this community, but it also stands as a marker for how efficient the script, editing and direction can be.”

<http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk>



The Festival appreciates the invaluable and generous support from the renowned David Shepard, Film Preservation and Associates and Blackhawk Films, Lobster Films, Greg Denning, Studio Canal, Margot Rossi, MK2, Jonathan Hertzberg, Kino Lorber, Josh Morrison, Jeff Masino, Flicker Alley, Robert Gamlen, Samantha Hagan, Marcelo Flaksbard, Hilton Prideaux, Leslie Eric May and the sublime flair and talents of Stephanie Khoo.

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